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January 2004, Volume 59, No. 1



## **Soldiers** The Official U.S. Army Magazine

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Printing: Gateway Press, Inc., Louisville, Ky

**Soldiers** (ISSN 0093-8440) is published monthly by the Army Chief of Public Affairs to provide the Total Army with information on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of the Army. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

■ **Send submissions and correspondence to Editor, Soldiers, 9325 Gunston Road, Suite S108, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581.** Phone: DSN 656-4486 or commercial 703-806-4486, or send e-mail to [soldiers@belvoir.army.mil](mailto:soldiers@belvoir.army.mil).

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■ **Military distribution:** From the U.S. Army Distribution Operations Facility, 1655 Woodson Road, St. Louis, MO 63114-6181, in accordance with Initial Distribution Number (IDN) 050007 subscription requirements submitted by commanders.

■ The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the department. Funds for printing this publication were approved by the Secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of Army Regulation 25-30. Library of Congress call number: U1.A827.

■ Periodicals postage paid at Fort Belvoir, VA, and additional mailing offices.

■ **Individual subscriptions:** Subscriptions can be purchased through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

■ **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to the Fort Belvoir address above.

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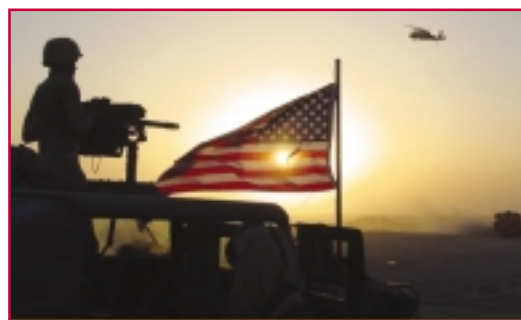


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### Front cover

A 478th Engineer Battalion Soldier stands watch as two medevac helicopters make their final approach for a landing near Baghdad.

—Original photo by CSM David N. Williford  
—Composite image by Soldiers Magazine

### Special Inserts

Relevant & Ready brochure and World and Iraq maps at page 9.



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

WASHINGTON DC 20310-0200

**T**hroughout this past year, the Army has continued to wage the war on terrorism. Around the world, Soldiers perform with determination, skill, and courage. Your contributions to Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and other missions over the last year have been absolutely critical in keeping the American people safe from harm. Threats to United States interests are evolving. We face increasing challenges from regional instability, transnational dangers, and asymmetric threats. To meet these challenges, we must leverage the very best of our Army.

No matter the future, the Army remains ready to serve our Nation. The Army provides a unique set of core competencies and capabilities. We train and equip Soldiers and grow leaders. We deliver relevant and ready land combat power to the Combatant Commanders and the Joint Team. Soldiers are Warriors, with a special ethos: mission first; never accept defeat; never quit; never leave a fallen comrade. Soldiers understand Duty, and are willing to make sacrifices for the good of the whole.

Our Soldiers and civilians, and their families, set the standard every day for selfless service. Today's Soldiers accept their responsibilities and perform every task and mission asked of them, just as their parents and grandparents did before them. But while our Soldiers are carrying on the legacy of earlier generations of American Soldiers, this is a different kind of war, a war in the shadows that will last for many years. This is not easy, and we cannot approach it as if it is business as usual.

There is no question that the pace of serving a Nation at war challenges our Army. We have more than 300,000 Soldiers deployed in 120 countries supporting various operations; it is hard to recall a time since WWII when we have been busier. But we are more than busy. We are an Army at war around the world, with urgent missions and critical tasks affecting the future of our Nation. We continue to meet the challenge with a seamless commitment of Active, Reserve, and National Guard Soldiers, and dedicated civilians

Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do for our great Nation. And may God bless you, your families, the Army, and the United States of America.

Peter J. Schoomaker  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

R.L. Brownlee  
Acting Secretary of the Army